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years had elapsed since the Pulayas were seriously reckoned as the subjects of His Highness the Maha Raja, though they were admittedly in the country from very early times. Even now they were without lands of their own for dwelling purposes, and were without the means to acquire lands. There were no hills in the western taluks of the Quilon Division, and all that could be said as having no present owner were the backwaters, the remaining lands having been mostly registered. He therefore requested that permission might be given to them to reclaim backwaters for habitation, as that was not likely to affect anybody else adversely and also that, should there be any lands, hills, *cherikals*, *pudurals* or *porambokes* in the interior of the taluks, available for registry, the same might be caused to be registered in the names of the Pulayas.

He further submitted that there were several Pulaya converts to Christianity in his division and he prayed that the same privileges as were accorded to the other Pulayas might be extended to them also.

*Dewan's reply.*—By G. O. No. 13029, dated the 4th December 1912, an extent of 500 acres of Sirkar land in the Vilappil *pakuthi*, Neyyattinkara taluk, has been reserved for the Pulayas of the Sadhu Jana Paripalana Sangham, and the Trivandrum Peishkar has been asked to divide the area into one acre blocks and register the same in the names of such of the Pulayas of the Samajam as agree to settle down in the lands. The *tharavila* on the lands has been remitted as a special case. The question of allowing similar concessions in the other parts of the State will be considered after the whole of these 500 acres is taken up by the Pulayas. No special concession can be granted to the Pulayas to reclaim backwaters, which come under *poramboke*.

15. The desirability of reconsidering G. O. No. 2933 L. R., dated the 18th March 1911, regarding irrigation works in the Southern Division.

*Mr. P. Krishna Pillai* (Member, Eraniel taluk) said that the area watered by the 1,623 irrigation tanks of the taluk was 9,103 acres and that, of those, only two tanks were now treated as "Major Irrigation works", irrigating an area of 802 acres. Under G. O. No. 2933/L. R., dated the 18th March 1911, the works to be done to the remaining 1,621 tanks irrigating an area of 8,301 acres fell under "Petty" or "Minor" works, and the ryots had either to do the whole works themselves in the case of the former, or pay half the cost of the works or such irrigation cess as might be fixed by the Government in the case of the latter. It was needless to say that the burden would sit very heavily on the ryots. Further, the ryots of the taluk had not in the past done any works at their cost The explanation for that state of affairs in the taluk was that there were no major works in the taluk and therefore the Government came to do such small works, petty or minor, at their own expense. Under the proviso to Section 7 of Regulation III of 1072, the provisions of the law should not be made applicable to the localities where, according to custom, the works were carried out or maintained by the Government at their entire cost, so that in whatever way the question be viewed, the charge should not fall on the ryots of the taluk. To add to the trouble of the ryots, several of the tank-beds, which served as good irrigation sources, were being rapidly auctioned away. The situation therefore was that most of the tank-beds were fast disappearing ; no irrigation works would be done by the

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Government ; and for the additional benefit conferred by th Kodayar Project, the ryots should pay a water-cess. I the floods of the last Thulam, there were several breaches o the sides of the *yelas* and irrigation sources in the Meycod Manavila and Neyyoor *pakuthies* ; but no works o any kind were done to them by the Irrigation Depar ment. The Member therefore requested that the G. O. migl be re-considered with due regard to the old custom and orde issued to the department concerned to do *all* irrigation work in the taluk at the cost of the Government. The tank beds should not also be sold, as they were very needful fo irrigation purposes.

*Dewan.*—Are the Minor works you are referring within the area commanded by the Kodayar Project?

*Member.*—They are.

*Dewan.*—If they *are* within that area, they will be con dered as Major works and the Government will have to the works.

The Member, continuing, said that the works within t commanded area were being considered as 'Minor' by t Irrigation officers. At any rate, that was the interpretati put upon the G. O. by those officers, whatever be the int tions of the Government. As already submitted, the ryots h not to spend any money on such works in the past. therefore prayed that the custom should be respected and ryots freed from the charge.

The Member also added that petitions relating to i gation matters presented by the ryots might be exempted fr the payment of court fees, in the interests of agriculture.

*Mr. T. Kumara Pillai* (Member, Kalkulam taluk) st that, since it was now declared that the works in the wl area commanded by the Kodayar Project would be treate "Major" works, he had not much to say on that point. the local officers were interpreting the orders of the Gov ment wrongly and were asking the ryots to contribute the cost of those works. To the Dewan's query, whethe would suffice if it was made clear that the irriga works within the commanded area should all be tre as Major works, the Member replied that it would answe far as that point was concerned.

He added that there were many other areas really outside area commanded by the Kodayar Project. As already poi out by the Member for the Eraniel taluk, the ryots of Nanj and Edanad had not paid anything in the past for w within the latter areas. As a matter of fact, works to the v of over four lakhs of rupees were executed wholly by Government between 1064 and 1075 and not a cash recovered from any of the ryots so far as the knowled the ryots went. The Member failed to see how it was re ted to the Government by the local Dewan Peishkar that were no works in the Southern Division, which were ent done at the cost of the Government and for which the

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were entitled to the benefit of the proviso to Section 7 of the Irrigation Regulation. The existence of a provision in the Regulation legalising the custom in such matters and, if his information was correct, of a specific reference to such works in South Travancore in the Statement of Objects and Reasons appended to the Bill which became Regulation III of 1072, would go to show that the proviso was intended to apply to places like South Travancore.

In the G. O. dated the 18th March 1911, which was based on the report of the Peishkars, it was stated that "Proviso to Section 7 is therefore inoperative". The Member said that that was the real cause of all the wrong interpretation and he requested that the same might be removed and clear orders issued not to demand any contribution from the ryots on any irrigation works in the Nanjanad and Edanad taluks.

*Dewan's reply.*—The matter will be enquired into.

## (2) Forest Revenue.

16. The need for the better administration of the Travancore Forests.

*Mr. N. Padmanabha Pillai* (Member, Karunagappalli taluk) observed that the forests were a valuable asset to the State, because they helped to regulate the climatic conditions and were an important source of revenue to the Government. Every civilised country was taking active steps to develop its forests. In their Administration Report for 1087, the Government had characterised the administration of the forests as satisfactory. The revenue was now slightly more than what it was in the past and some steps had also been taken to improve the forests. All that was due to the present Conservator and the thanks of the people were due to him. But the Member regretted to observe that, if regard was had to the receipts and expenditure of the department, the proportion the latter bore to the former, and also to the kind of protection the forests afforded to the people generally and the agriculturists in particular, the administration of the department could not be said to be satisfactory, either now or in the past. Ever since 1000 M. E. a separate department of forests was organised and it was therefore 88 years since the forests were being managed and worked by an independent officer, the Conservator. Out of the total area of the State, about 2,500 square miles—more than one-third—was now managed by the department. In 1087, the revenue from that area was Rs. 9,56,628, the expenditure Rs. 6,73,245, and the net revenue to the Government Rs. 2,83,383. In Mysore, the forests, covering about an equal area, *viz.*, 2,631 square miles, yielded 22 lakhs, while, in Cochin, an area of only 605 square miles yielded 6 lakhs of rupees per year. The Member said that he was aware that, out of the 22 lakhs in Mysore, as much as 12 lakhs came from sandalwood alone, because, wherever it stood, sandalwood was there the property of the Government. But he failed to see why similar arrangements should not be made here also. So far as Travancore was concerned, he said that, going back 20 years, in 1068, when the total area of the forests was 1,048 square miles, the receipts of the department amounted to Rs. 5,67,687, the expenditure to Rs. 2,90,643, and the net balance to Rs. 2,77,044, which was nearly equal to the net revenue of 1087.

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